

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

REGENERATION AND DEVELOPMENT PANEL

Minutes from the Meeting of the Regeneration and Development Panel held on Wednesday, 23rd March, 2016 at 4.00 pm in the Research Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs K Mellish (Chairman), Mrs J Collingham, C Crofts, M Chenery of Horsbrugh, M Howland, P Kunes, J M Tilbury, A Tyler, Mrs E Watson, D Whitby and Mrs A Wright.

Portfolio Holders

Councillor A Beales - Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Industrial Assets

Councillor Mrs E Nockolds – Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health

Officers:

Chris Bamfield – Executive Director

Matthew Henry – Property Services Manager

Ostap Paparega – Regeneration and Economic Development Manager

RD57: **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There was none.

RD58: **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The minutes from the meeting held on 24 February 2016 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RD59: **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Kunes declared an interest in RD64: Town Hall Update as his wife was on the Audrey Muriel Stratford Trust.

RD60: **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was none.

RD61: **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillor Miss Bambridge – RP67: King's Lynn Strategic Land Acquisition.

RD62: **CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE**

There was none.

RD63: **MATTERS REFERRED TO THE PANEL FROM OTHER COUNCIL BODIES AND RESPONSES MADE TO PREVIOUS PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS/REQUESTS**

The Panel noted the response made by Cabinet to the recommendations from the Joint Panel Meeting held on 24 February 2016:

- Modifications to the Local Plan
- Assessing King's Lynn and West Norfolk's Housing Requirement.

RD64: **TOWN HALL UPDATE**

The Executive Director referred to the report which provided information to support the visit of the Panel to the Town Hall, which had taken place prior to the meeting. He referred to the Financial Implications as set out in part 7 of the report and explained that the Council had submitted an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for additional funding. There had been some overspend on the project as it was not the original intention to refurbish the toilets, however whilst the contractors were in the building, and because of the condition of the toilets, the decision was made to refurbish at the same time. If the application for additional funding was unsuccessful the works would be funded from the Town Hall Reserves.

The Executive Director explained that a delay in the ground work because of electric cables had also increased the cost of the project as this had a knock on effect on the work to the lift. He explained that the application to the Heritage Lottery Fund was for 66% of the overspend.

The Executive Director stated that the work carried out had futureproofed the building for the next twenty to thirty years and he was very pleased with the outcome.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Mellish, thanked the Executive Director for his report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below. The Chairman commended the project and thanked all those involved. She asked for clarification on how the overspend would be paid if funding was not awarded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Executive Director explained that the Town Hall Reserves had not been used for the past few years on the anticipation that the Heritage Lottery Fund Project would come forward. There were adequate funds available in the reserves to cover the overspend. He explained that the new lift had to be installed as the existing lift was not suitable for evacuations and it was the ideal opportunity to refurbish the toilets whilst the contractors were on site.

Councillor Tyler felt that the result of the project was wonderful and stated that if the toilets had not been refurbished it would have let the

scheme down. He explained that the toilets were part of the facilities for the public, so hoped that the funding would be awarded.

The Executive Director reminded those present that initially the Council had submitted an application for funding for a larger scale project, however this was rejected by the Heritage Lottery Fund and a smaller scheme which was considered at regional level had subsequently been submitted and approved.

The Executive Director provided information on publicity and marketing. He explained that a portion of the Funding awarded would be used for promotions and publicity and the Marketing and Communications Officer post had now been filled and the new member of staff was due to start shortly. Councillor Crofts suggested that publicity material could be sent out with the Council Tax bills and the Executive Director commented that the bills had already gone out this year, but he would note Councillor Croft's comments. The Executive Director confirmed that a wide range of publicity and promotional material would be made available over varying platforms.

In response to a question from Councillor Howland, the Executive Director confirmed that the lift had an independent power supply and could be used for evacuation purposes.

Councillor Mrs Watson thanked all those involved in the project and commented that it was good that it linked into all heritage in the town centre. She hoped that schools would use Stories of Lynn and asked that consideration be given to offering the College the opportunity to use the temporary exhibition space to promote their work.

The Executive Director noted comments made by the Panel regarding the shoal of spoons, the accents used by some of the actors on the interactive displays and sound issues.

In response to a question from Councillor Tyler, the Executive Director explained that a four year activity plan had been produced which would be used to engage schools and a learning and engagement room was available for use by schools.

The Executive Director anticipated that it was likely that the facility would be open to the public for free on Heritage Open Day.

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health, Councillor Mrs Nockolds commented that she was pleased that Members had enjoyed their tour and hoped that Members would spread the word and promote the attraction. She explained that the humidity of the archives was still not quite at the correct level to bring the records back in, but it was hoped that the levels would be correct by May 2016. She commented that it was good to see the Town Hall being brought back into regular use. She explained that the courtyard area could now be used for weddings and there were lots of rooms available for events. She

referred to the Hub Room in Stories of Lynn which provided information on other attractions and heritage sites in King's Lynn. The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health reminded Members that Lynn Museum and Stories of Lynn would be open on Sundays.

The Executive Director referred to the proposed statue of King John and explained that the statue would signpost visitors to the Stories of Lynn. .

In response to a question from Councillor Tyler, the Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health informed those present that an exhibition was taking place in the Customs House to mark the 400th Anniversary of Shakespeare's death and the work of the King's Players.

RESOLVED: (i) The report was noted.

(ii) A further updated be presented to the Regeneration and Development Panel in October 2016.

RD65: VERBAL UPDATE ON THE ENTERPRISE ZONE

The Regeneration and Economic Development Manager provided the Panel with an update on the Enterprise Zone. He reminded the Panel that part of the NORA site had been granted Enterprise Zone status in November 2015.

A copy of the presentation provided to the Panel is attached.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs Mellish, thanked the Regeneration and Economic Development Manager for his update and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

In response to a question from Councillor Tyler, the Regeneration and Economic Development Manager explained that a lot of inward investment enquiries had been received over the past two years from businesses outside the borough as well as local businesses with expansion and growth potential. He explained that all enquiries for the Enterprise Zone would be considered on an individual basis and it was important that displacement did not occur. The Enterprise Zone was for new businesses or expanding businesses and eligibility criteria could be produced if required.

The Vice Chairman commented that high quality businesses should be encouraged to the area and the Regeneration and Economic Development Manager explained that the design and infrastructure on site should hopefully attract high quality businesses. He explained that there was no pressure to occupy all sites quickly, however if enquiries were not forthcoming, other options could be investigated.

In response to a question from the Chairman, the Regeneration and Economic Development Manager commented that Devolution should

not have an impact on the scheme as Local Enterprise Partnerships were part of the Devolution Deal. He explained that a legally binding contract was in place between Government and the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership to protect from political changes.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Industrial Assets, Councillor Beales explained that the build quality would be high, which should hopefully attract high quality businesses. He reiterated that there should be no impact on the zone in terms of the Devolution process and Devolution was all about stimulating economic growth. The Portfolio Holder commented that a clustering area of expertise would have significant advantages. He explained that Devolution would afford more control of the skills agenda to reflect the local economy and work could be carried out with the College to ensure that the demands of local businesses and new businesses coming into the area could be met.

The Vice Chairman referred to a similar site elsewhere in the Country and how social space and leisure facilities were provided on site, so people did not have to leave. The Regeneration and Economic Development Manager explained that a commercial basis approach would be taken and networking and social space could be available as well as the facilities offered in the King's Lynn Innovation Centre.

RESOLVED: The update was noted.

RD66: **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED: That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

RD67: **EXEMPT CABINET REPORT - KING'S LYNN STRATEGIC LAND ACQUISITION**

The Property Services Manager presented his report which set out outline terms for a proposed strategic land and property acquisition in King's Lynn. Authority was sought from Cabinet to progress the acquisition through to completion, subject to agreeing acceptable terms in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder.

The Chairman thanked the Property Services Manager for his report and invited questions and comments from the Panel.

The Property Services Manager responded to questions relating to contamination issues and future use of the site. The Property Services Manager explained that future uses of the site would be looked at in due course and he agreed to come back to the Panel at the relevant

time to update them on progress and ask for their suggestions on how the site could be developed.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Industrial Assets thanked the Panel for considering the report and was pleased that Members supported the proposals to progress the acquisition.

RESOLVED: That the Regeneration and Development Panel support the recommendations to Cabinet as set out in the report.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

RD68: **WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD DECISIONS LIST**

The Chairman referred to the Panel's Work Programme and requested that Members of the Panel contact her if they had suggestions on items they would like to be considered.

The Panel discussed recent articles in the press and discussions held at the King's Lynn Area Advisory Committee regarding the use of the Hardings Pits Bus route and the potential to open it up to other vehicles.

The Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Industrial Assets explained that discussions would be held with Norfolk County Council and it would be good to gauge the view of the Regeneration and Development Panel if the matter progressed.

RESOLVED: (i) The Panel's Work Programme was noted.

RD69: **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Regeneration and Development Panel was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 20th April 2016 at 6.00pm in the Committee Suite, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn, Norfolk.

The meeting closed at 5.20 pm